



TEXAS Adult & Family Literacy QUARTERLY

Texas Center for the Advancement of Literacy & Learning

Adult Education and Literacy at the Texas Workforce Commission

*by Anson Green, State Director
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This year brings transformative changes across the field of adult education and literacy, the most significant of which is the transfer of the adult education program from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC). This transfer presents both new opportunities for system enhancement and, as can be expected with any change, uncertainty and questions related to what the transfer means for local programs and, most importantly, our students.

Many of the questions we all share will be addressed in the coming months as the program officially transfers on September 1, 2013, and the TWC Commissioners begin to develop the policy, goals, and strategic objectives for the program.

Outlining how this important process progresses, and how adult education stakeholders can participate, is important to underscore both the transparency of the policy-making process and to identify areas where practitioners in the field can participate. This is a new and important mission for TWC and a critical one for the state. TWC is dedicated to creating avenues for discussion with the field.

Even before the Texas Legislature closed its regular session in May, the TWC, TEA, and Texas LEARNS were already collaborating to both understand the potential areas of work and what actions would have to be taken to ensure a smooth transfer with no disruptions in service. Since Senate Bill 307 was passed and signed by Governor Perry on May 18th the agencies have been working arduously to continue the work and begin the transfer process. Over one

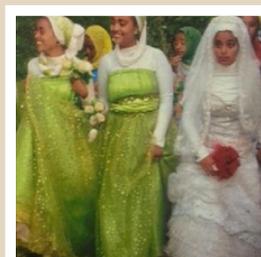


**Anson
Green**

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hundred contracts are being transferred from TEA to TWC; the important work to transition TEAMS has begun; contracts to continue Texas LEARNS, the GREAT centers, and TCALL (Texas Center for the Advancement of Literacy and Learning) have been initiated; TWC has begun the hiring process for program staff and hired a director; and, most importantly, TWC staff and the three Commissioners have been active in gathering input from across the field.

Through meetings with key Adult Education leaders as well as a series of Adult Basic Education Public Stakeholder meetings that started in June, TWC staff and the Commissioners engaged hundreds of local stakeholders from across the state. The purpose of these public meetings was to hear from interested Texans concerning the program transfer and to provide an open forum for individuals and groups to share ideas and suggestions about current successes and challenges, and opportunities for further advancement. Instructors, program directors, students, workforce board directors and staff, volunteer literacy providers, businesses and others from across the state have actively participated and shared ideas with TWC staff and Commissioners through these events. The process underscores the agency's commitment to listen and learn from professionals both in the field and the consumers of these critical services.

After the program transfer on September 1, the three TWC Commissioners will work with agency staff to begin the development and approval of agency rules—the policies—that will govern the guidelines and priorities for the program.

The rules process once again provides the field opportunities to share comment and suggestions for programmatic enhancements and priorities. The TWC rules process is similar to that of other state agencies in that it provides occasion for public review and comment on emerging policy. At TWC, the process consists of several phases that will begin in September for Adult Education and Literacy.

The first phase is the development of a Policy Concept Paper, where agency staff, including many of the staff that participated in the Stakeholder meetings, will draft a paper that outlines programmatic decision points and related recommendations for the Commissioners to consider and approve for public comment. After Commission approval,

the Concept Paper will be available on the TWC website and notice will be sent to the field, inviting comment. At this point, the public can provide feedback that will be reviewed by staff, reviewed and used to draft proposed program rules. These draft rules will be presented to the Commissioners for consideration and approval for publication and comment.

Once the Commission approves the draft rules, they are published in the Texas Register (<http://www.sos.state.tx.us/texreg/index.shtml>) for thirty days. TWC will once again notify the field that the rules are out for public comment.

Once the comment period for rules closes, TWC staff will once again review and compile comments and incorporate this feedback into the final rules. These revised rules will be presented to the Commissioners for final approval. With final approval, TWC staff will have the necessary direction to both develop the requests for proposals for services as well as manage the program.

Adult Education and Literacy is a complex, multifaceted program. TWC staff anticipates several rounds of rulemaking over the next several years to ensure that the opportunities for system enhancement continue and the Commissioners have time to review emerging trends and consider the most appropriate options to spur and support innovation and related performance.

Throughout the next few months, engagement from the field in the policy development of the Adult Education and Literacy program will be critical to setting the direction for the administration of the Adult Education and Literacy program and developing new or expanding current innovative program designs and enhancements.

A strong commitment and spirit of collaboration to initiate innovations as a system is high at both state and local level. The Texas Workforce Commission is enthusiastic about taking a leadership role in Adult Education and Literacy for the state and looks forward to actively participating with the field's many stakeholders over the next year to develop and deploy core services and innovative enhancements across the state.

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Two Texas Adult Educators Named National Leaders in Adult Literacy Professional Development



Federico Salas-Isnardi

At the annual conference of the Commission on Adult Basic Education (COABE) in March, Federico Salas-Isnardi of TCALL was appointed as that organization's incoming national Professional Development Chair. Salas-Isnardi, who has worked in adult education in Texas for 25 years, also serves as co-director of the Commission for Adult Basic Education and Literacy (CABEL) for the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE). Serving both national organizations concurrently

places Salas-Isnardi in a perfect position to act as a liaison between the needs of adult basic educators and their students in the classroom, and researchers and professors of adult education. Salas-Isnardi says he sees his double appointment as an opportunity not only to help bring research to practice but, just as importantly, to represent to researchers the needs of adult education teachers.

AAACE believes that if the field of adult education wants to expand opportunities for adult growth and development, it must work on bringing together researchers and professors on the one side and adult education practitioners on the other. Adult educators must foster the development and dissemination of theory, research, and information and combine them with the professional wisdom and best practices of teachers and instructors. To this end, AAACE hopes to work closely with organizations such as ProLiteracy and COABE to support a common interest and develop a mutually beneficial research agenda. To learn more about AAACE or to join, visit www.aaace.org.

COABE is the national professional organization of adult educators. Texas adult education professionals who are members of TALAE (Texas Association for Literacy and Adult Education) are also, automatically, members of COABE and have the opportunity to influence the direction of the commission through their vote and participation. For more information, visit www.coabe.org.

Salas-Isnardi recently completed a term as Chair of the Association of Adult Literacy Professional Developers (AALPD) and was replaced by another Texas adult educator, Melissa Nitu, who has been Director of the Adult Education Cooperative of Guadalupe, Comal, & Kendall Counties since 2008. Nitu became Chair of AALPD in a succession of Texas influence. Ms. Nitu says that her goals for AALPD which she calls "more



Melissa Nitu

of a vision" are to find ways to deliver cutting edge professional development resources to the field; to advocate to government and other stakeholders, the importance of adult education for the needs of our students, and "the importance of a well-trained force of adult educators equipped to help America's adult students." Her third goal is to communicate to adult educators the "benefits of AALPD membership to all professional developers in adult education everywhere through increased communication via the Internet and social media."

AALPD is an organization for adult literacy educators working in the area of professional development. The main purpose of AALPD is to build a network of professional developers to share information and communicate fresh ideas and promising practices; but we also endeavor to provide professional development for professional developers and to contribute to the field by shaping policy initiatives. If you are interested in professional development or work in that area and want to join (for free) visit the AALPD Website at www.aalpd.org.

Having two adult educators from Texas serve in important voluntary roles at the national level gives our state an opportunity to be visible in the national stage and to influence professional development and research-to-practice initiatives while giving adult educators in the state access to national networks.

New Data About Adult Literacy, Education, and Employment Around the World: PIAAC

Reprinted from COABE Membership Update
By Karly Ford, American Institutes for Research

We are just weeks from the official data release for the Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC), on October 8th, 2013. PIAAC is a study that assesses key cognitive and workplace skills in 24 participating countries and regions, including the United States. PIAAC provides a new and rich international comparison of the adult workforce that will enable the United States to better understand its global competitiveness and benchmark how well education and training systems are meeting emerging skill demand. We believe that this data - and other PIAAC tools - will be of great interest to practitioners and researchers like you. To learn more about PIAAC and what it can offer, please visit the NCES website. <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/piaac/>

Bridging the Digital Divide: Preparing for GED® 2014

by Dr. Glenda Rose

With the GED® 2014 coming out as a Computer-Based Test (CBT), adult educators in Texas must confront in a fresh way the “Digital Divide” in Adult Basic Education (ABE), Adult Secondary Education (ASE), and English as a Second Language (ESL) classrooms. The term “digital divide” refers to an unequal availability or opportunity to learn digital skills (International ICT Literacy Panel, 2002). While this issue has been around for a while (see *Literacy Links*, March 2004), the exponential growth in the use of digital technologies and the transition to CBTs from paper-based tests (PBTs) escalates bridging the digital divide to the top of the priority list. With regard to how the digital divide is experienced in classrooms, three areas of concern have been identified: availability of technology, frequency of use, and purpose of employing technological resources (Hohlfeld, Ritzhaupt, Barron, & Kemker, 2008).

With regard to availability of resources, hard data on how many adult education classrooms in Texas have access to computers is not readily accessible. Anecdotally, during professional development sessions on integrating technology and social media, instructors have indicated clearly that there is not an equitable availability of computer resources. Some instructors only have their personal laptop to use in their classroom, and they may or may not be able to access the Internet. Others say that there are computers in the classroom where they meet, but they are not allowed to access them due to administrative issues. On the other hand, some larger programs have full computer labs and all adult education classes can schedule times to access the lab. In some of these cases, students are allowed to use the labs to complete distance learning hours (provided they are not signed in for direct instruction, of course).

For those with limited resources, there are resources for ideas on how to make the best use of a “one-computer classroom.” For example, several links at www1.smsd.org/staffdev/high/technology.htm provide ideas on how to provide computer instruction with just one computer for students and instructor. However, asking for donations of laptops and other computer equipment from the community is also a good idea. Many individuals and corporations upgrade their computer

equipment every year to two years. I once received 30 perfectly good desktops from the U.S. Treasury, although I had to purchase software from www.techsoup.org to make them classroom appropriate. You can also use free versions of popular software such as www.openoffice.org and audacity.sourceforge.net. By asking around (including through social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn), you may find some fairly new computers that your students can use. You can also create relationships (collaborate!) with local schools, colleges, one-stop centers and libraries to gain access to their computer labs. In addition, the GREAT Centers will check out technology to programs for projects on a limited basis.

The second issue we are facing is frequency of use. In order to prepare students for GED® 2014 and beyond, we must provide the opportunity for students to become very familiar with basic computing skills. In AY 2011-2012, Austin Learning Academy asked ABE and ESL students to participate in a beginning-of-year and end-of-year survey regarding technology use. Of the 98 respondents at the beginning of the year, only 59 (61%) had computers at home, and of those nearly a quarter (22%) did not have Internet access. That percentage drops to 38% (with 30% having no Internet access) if you consider only ESL students. What this means to us as educators is that computer practice has to be integrated into our instructional time for roughly half of our students. Class time is the ONLY time they will have practice time, so “computer time” in the lesson plan has to be more than an occasional activity. It needs to be regular and frequent, but also purposeful.

Purposeful computer time is the final consideration for bridging the digital divide. Just having computers and having students get on them on a regular basis will not be enough to ensure that they are ready to face the GED® or other jobs requiring digital skills (which, nowadays, is almost all of them). Textbooks for low level ESL computer users, such as *Out and About in the World of Computers* (Hemmert and Sander, 2008), can also be used for ABE students who lack computer skills. Unfortunately, these types of texts are practically outdated by the time they are published. Another alternative would be to create lessons from

free resources like www.gcflearnfree.org, which provides options for different platforms and MS Office™ in six different release versions to match your computer's software, as well as basic computing skills.

Integrating computing skills into already existing curricula is essential. The same writing assignment can be given, but the method of submission to the instructor changes. It must be turned in electronically: on a flash drive, by email, or saved to a cloud server like Dropbox or Google Drive. Presentations done on posters can be turned into PowerPoint or Movie Maker projects. Audio presentations can be loaded to www.vocaroo.com or shared on a closed Facebook class page or YouTube channel. If the school system blocks these resources, other options such as a Google Site, Schoology course, or Wiki will work as well.

After purposefully integrating computer instruction with our ABE and ESL students, Austin Learning Academy found that students increased in EVERY indicator of computer literacy. (Indicators included items such as computer ownership and access to Internet, but also items such as keyboarding, document creation, emailing attachments, saving files in different formats, and accessing ParentConnect, Austin's parent portal). Home computer ownership and Internet access also increased,

especially among ESL students (17%). Students purchased computers once the computer had value to them, i.e., they had experience with using the computer for different purposes. This finding is consistent with research that has shown that adult learners who learn how to use technology "are highly motivated learners that are capable of absorbing both the content and technological skills necessary to succeed" (Johnson, 2011).

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Trends & Issues

DACA - Don't Let Your Students Miss This Chance

by Terry Shearer

The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, known as DACA, is the executive order from President Obama that provides children of undocumented parents a path to legal status in the United States. It allows these individuals access to opportunities in higher education, the military, and the workforce. One would think that the flow of information about this new consideration from the Department of US Citizenship and Immigration Services is common knowledge, but there are still eligible students in our programs who have yet to apply.

You, teachers and administrators, may be able to pass on the information to these students and help them achieve the dream of a better education, the opportunity to serve in the armed services, or fill a much needed job position in a growing

international or technical field. Many of our students would fit into the guidelines listed below. I suspect the number of students who can benefit from this legislation will certainly be significant statewide. Hispanics alone in Region 4's service area totaled 357 students who met the age requirement. In total, up to 770 students met the age requirement including those in the 25-44 category (TEAMS does not breakdown this report by year of age and some will be over 31 years in this category). Those under the age of 25 totaled 530.

The numbers are even more dramatic statewide. There are currently 4,150 students between the ages of 16 and 18. Of those students, 514 are English as Second Language (ESL) students, while Adult Basic Education (ABE) totals 3,215, and Adult Secondary Education (ASE) has 421. In the 19 to 24 year

old age range, 4,589 are ESL, and 7,648 are ABE, 667 are ASE. The 25-44 age range has by far the most students with 25,656 in ESL, 12,107 in ABE and 855 in ASE (TEAMS Table III, statewide report, 2013). While these numbers include many native born citizens, there is also reason to believe that there are many students in each of the age ranges that would qualify for the program. While we are getting a few calls from the public, there is good reason to believe that we have not reached all eligible students.

Getting started

The first step is to review the guidelines for consideration under this action. The guidelines and tables can be found on the USCIS website

(www.uscis.gov)

Guidelines

You may request consideration of deferred action for childhood arrivals if you:

1. Were under the age of 31 as of June 15, 2012;
2. Came to the United States before reaching your 16th birthday;
3. Have continuously resided in the United States since June 15, 2007, up to the present time;
4. Were physically present in the United States on June 15, 2012, and at the time of making your request for consideration of deferred action with USCIS;
5. Entered without inspection before June 15, 2012, or your lawful immigration status expired as of June 15, 2012;
6. Are currently in school, have graduated or obtained a certificate of completion from high school, have obtained a general education development (GED) certificate, or are an honorably discharged veteran of the Coast Guard or Armed Forces of the United States; and
7. Have not been convicted of a felony, significant misdemeanor, three or more other misdemeanors, and do not otherwise pose a threat to national security or public safety.

Age Requirements

Anyone requesting consideration for deferred action under this process must have been under 31 years old as of June 15, 2012. You must also be at least 15 years or older to request deferred action, unless you are currently in removal proceedings or have a final removal or voluntary departure order, as summarized in the table on the USCIS website www.uscis.gov

The Q and A section of the US Immigration website further describes educational programs acceptable under the guidelines. The term *‘currently in school’* is defined below in an excerpt from the frequently asked questions (FAQs) of the USCIS website.

Q1: Does “currently in school” refer to the date on which the request for consideration of deferred action is filed?

A1: To be considered “currently in school” under the guidelines, you must be enrolled in school on the date you submit a request for consideration of deferred action under this process.

Q2: Who is considered to be “currently in school” under the guidelines?

A2: To be considered “currently in school” under the guidelines, you must be enrolled in:

- a public or private elementary school, junior high or middle school, high school, or secondary school;
- an education, literacy, or career training program (including vocational training) that is designed to lead to placement in postsecondary education, job training, or employment and where you are working toward such placement; or
- an education program assisting students either in obtaining a regular high school diploma or its recognized equivalent under state law (including a certificate of completion, certificate of attendance, or alternate award), or in passing a General Educational Development (GED) exam or other equivalent state-authorized exam.

Such education, literacy, or career training programs include, but are not limited to, programs funded, in whole or in part, by federal or state grants. Programs funded by other sources may qualify if they are administered by providers of demonstrated effectiveness, such as institutions of higher education, including community colleges, and certain community-based organizations.

Instructions for filing the application and the forms are also to be found on the USCIS website. Students may be interested in touring the USCIS website to learn about all of the guidelines and special circumstances that allow immigrants to apply for permanent residence. Under these guidelines many of our ABE/ GED students will qualify as well as some of our ESL students. Please share this information with all of your students. If this immigration opportunity does not apply to your students, ask them to tell their friends and neighbors.

In addition to the website, the letter from Janet Napolitano outlines the criteria for eligibility and would make a great reading activity for the classroom. Students could use the information above and the memorandum to learn new vocabulary and contrast the statements in both documents. The content could result in a writing exercise to persuade by expressing opinions on immigration reform. An oral debate could also be done for a lower level class.

As we approach pending legislation on immigration reform, learning English and completing secondary education will certainly be included in forthcoming bills. Let’s be proactive in helping students gain the information they need to be full participants in the country in which they have resided for many years.

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TEAMS Table III, TEAMS Table III, statewide report, 2013

TEAMS Table III, TEAMS Table III, statewide report, 2013 Region 4, 2013

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United States Citizenship and Immigration Services: Guidelines (2012). [USCIS Home Page, www.uscis.gov/](#)

About the Author

Terry Shearer has worked in Adult Education since 1988. Ms. Shearer is currently the Advocacy member of the TextESOL IV affiliate, for the TESOL organization.

Acknowledgement: Thanks to Federico Salas-Isnardi, for providing sources for references found in this article

Ideas for Teachers of Adults

A Walk in the Clouds...A Movie in the ESL Classroom

by Lee Steiner

Do not instantly dismiss the idea of showing a movie in your ESL (English as a Second Language) classroom as a “blow-off class” with no language learning value! A movie, creatively presented and explored, can have big-screen impact on the acquisition of listening skills by providing your students with exposure to real language exchanges uttered in authentic settings complete with the visual cues of facial expressions and gestures to boost their comprehension. Also, take advantage of the English language subtitles, that DVDs provide, another learning tool to enhance your students’ understanding of the on-screen conversations.

Introduce the story by showing the theatrical trailer (usually included on the DVD) during class the week before. Choose a movie that will resonate with students from all countries and prove to be a rich topic for classroom discussion. For example, every culture deals with the struggle between the younger generation’s modern lifestyle choices and the older family members’ desire to continue the traditional ways held dear for generations.

I hosted a “movie night” and showed the selected film all in one evening with an intermission at the crucial point in the movie’s plot. That gave us the time to discuss, over refreshments, what we thought might happen next.

If you choose to show a film over two days of class time, you should still split it at the crucial plot point. Upper-level students could write their story predictions in sentence form to be read and discussed at the beginning of the next class before watching the second half. Mixed-ability groups could discuss the story so far and make a list of options. Lower-level English students could receive a hand-out with multiple outcomes and select which they think most likely to happen. Regardless, be sure to stop at the height of the story arc to create a “cliffhanger” -- your students will want to see what happens next!

After the movie, review student predictions and discuss why they may or may not have been accurate. You can provide your students with a movie fact sheet or a prepared worksheet to prompt them to speak about the film. Talk about the culture clash, the generation gap, and be prepared to re-play selected scenes to stimulate conversation. Invite students to share any similar experiences they’ve had.

I presented *A Walk in the Clouds*, released in 1995 and starring Keanu Reeves and Aitana Sanchez-Gijon. This romantic, beautifully-filmed movie runs 102 minutes with subtitles in English and Spanish. *A Walk in the Clouds* demonstrates the importance of family, the desire to belong and to be loved for who you are.

Well-conceived characters of three generations illustrate the impulsive mistakes of youth and the difficulties of imperfect parents caught between their elders and their children.

My school approved my movie selection and provided popcorn and lemonade to make it more theatrical. We also served fresh grapes since the story takes place in a vineyard! Students could bring a pillow or blanket if they wanted to lounge on the floor instead of sitting in the classroom chairs. Whether you screen your movie on a television with a DVD player or with a DVD in a laptop connected to an LCD projector, I'd suggest testing your equipment before the event to avoid last-minute technical difficulties.

The themes in *A Walk in the Clouds* struck a universal chord with my students. A collective "Aww!" went up when I stopped the film when a heartsick Paul, who is about to leave, turns back and sees the light in Victoria's bedroom window. No one could wait to see what would happen to the star-crossed lovers!

Movie Night could become a regular event at your school with student input about future films. How about *Bend it like Beckham* (India/England), *The Joy Luck Club* (China/USA), or even *Local Hero* (USA/Scotland)? Students bond when they share a common viewing experience that invites them to share their own past

social situations, their country's culture, and how these affect their lives now.

It's easy to find movie information and class worksheets online for just about any film you choose. Here are a few resources for this particular movie and for screening movies in general, in the ESL classroom.

Resources

The Internet Movie Data Base www.imdb.com

[Listening, Viewing and Imagination: Movies in ESL Classes -](#)

[Close: TEFLIN Journal](#) - Post-viewing Worksheet for *A Walk in the Clouds*

Fun with Grammar: *A Walk in the Clouds*. [Passive Voice - AzarGrammar.com](#)

1997 Prentice Hall Regents. Duplication for classroom use is permitted.

[The Use of Movie Videos to Enhance Cross-cultural Understanding](#)

About the Author

Lee Steiner translates her love of language into an on-going story of teaching ESL to learners from many countries. A native Texan, she loves to travel abroad and this, she believes, gives her insight into issues her students face here in the U.S. She teaches at the Adult Reading Center, Inc. in Pearland, Texas.

Five Minutes of Something Else

by Angela Galindo

Many adult ESL (English as a Second Language) students attend night classes after a long day at work. Their time in the class should feel pertinent and valuable to them. It needs to include a variety of activities and be lively as well, so that their exhaustion will not overcome them. In my beginners' ESL classroom I felt they needed some stretching time during our class, so I instituted five minutes of exercise as a daily routine.

Moving and Learning

Initially it was used to review the parts of the body and some direction words such as stretch, turn, bend, etc. Then I found a nice children's video program titled *Deskercise*, which is offered through the Discovery Education website.

In the video, an instructor dressed in tights that show and human organs guides the students through imaginary situations such as Christopher Columbus in his ship, skiing in the mountains, or Alice in Wonderland. Even though it is a program created for children, my adult students are willing to follow the directions and pretend the situations. At the same time they learn about the States, and about history and literature. They get familiar with listening to

English through a whole body response activity that only takes 5 to 10 minutes of our class time. This activity also contributes to their health through promoting exercise.

Adult students come from a variety of backgrounds and occupations. In my beginners' class, some of them are stay at home mothers, others work in factories, and others work cleaning houses. I wonder what could be a way to help them see further options and perspectives beyond their actual situations. I wish they would go to college as soon as possible, but many of them don't see college as part of their future. They think their time has already gone by and just want to learn English. Even young moms think their responsibility is only to their children, not realizing how young they are and will be still when their children grow up. Many of them don't have fond memories of their school experiences, and feel inappropriately prepared for any further schooling lacking basic math and science knowledge.

Introducing Science Concepts

For this reason, I decided to include a minute of science in our class. We talk about one simple concept each day. The first one

we talked about was the difference between matter and energy. They give examples of matter and examples of energy. In a following class, I showed them the periodic table of elements, and we talked about some of the elements that are common to them, such as gold, copper, aluminum, or carbon. We talked about how water is oxygen and hydrogen, and I told them how the periodic table contains a summary of the entire universe.

Everything that we know is made of one or more of those elements. This simple concept was a revelation for them, as it was a revelation for me when I learned this not long ago. Chemistry is not a foreign and impossible subject, but the matter that we find everywhere, and it is all summarized in just these hundred or so elements. Even more, 99% of the Universe and all life is made of just five of these elements.

In another class we talked about gravity and how Galileo Galilei affirmed that everything falls at the same time, or that gravity pulls everything with the same force, no matter their weight. This is not evident in our daily life. If you let go of a piece of paper and a golf ball or another heavy object at the same time, the piece of paper will evidently fall at a slower pace and touch the ground later. Was Galileo wrong? He has been famous for hundreds of years, so we might be missing something. The missing piece is that Galileo said it had to be in a vacuum. We cannot produce the vacuum in the classroom, but if we crunch the paper to a similar

size of the golf ball, no matter their difference in weight, they will fall approximately at the same time. These short discussions and scientific explorations expand their English vocabulary and improve their science knowledge.

Today I am going to ask them what happens if I place some water or some rice in a bucket and put the bucket upside down. They will probably say that the rice will fall because of gravity, but I will move the bucket in a circle and the rice will not fall. We will talk then about the balance of forces, centripetal force and how that demonstration relates to how the moon stays in orbit around the earth.

Each topic takes just a few minutes, but it brings interesting angles of knowledge and new vocabulary to relate to a science concept. I hope these little snippets of knowledge will be useful when they are ready to pursue their GED® and go on to their college goals. Maybe they will see it is not impossible.

About the Author

I am Angela Galindo, adult educator at Lone Star College and a kindergarten teacher in Houston, TX. I received a grant from www.fundforteachers.org for a science summer at the University of Cambridge in London. If you want me to share with you other science mini topics you can write me at sorayag@sbcglobal.net.

How I Took the Pain out of a Geometry Lesson

by Barbara Morse

Did you ever enjoy accidentally hitting your thumb with a hammer? No, of course not.

Did you say you would not want to do that again? Of course you did.

Rule: We learn to avoid painful things.

Did you ever taste something incredibly delicious?

Did you say you would like to experience that again? Of course you did.

Rule: We learn to repeat things that give us pleasure.

Wouldn't it make sense then, to do everything in our power to make our lessons pleasurable experiences so our students would want to keep coming to class? And did you know our brains function better when we are experiencing pleasure, and we learn

better the more of the five senses that are involved in the learning experience. This "brain" rule applies to people in general, from little children through adults, so I knew it would be OK to use with my students who range from their mid-twenties through their fifties. Although I have mostly women students, the third who are men also seemed interested in this project.

Here is how I make a geometry lesson fun for my adult GED® (ABE and ASE) students.

I decided my students should use their math skills to have the hands-on pleasure of making something. I found house plans for a bird house online at [images of free house plans blueprints](#). The students received a copy of the plans, a worksheet, and a sheet of brightly colored card stock with which to make their model bird houses. They got into groups and used their knowledge of ratios to figure the dimensions of a bird house that would be 1/2, 1/3 or 1/4 of the original plans. Students helped each other as they worked on the math, so it was also a fun social

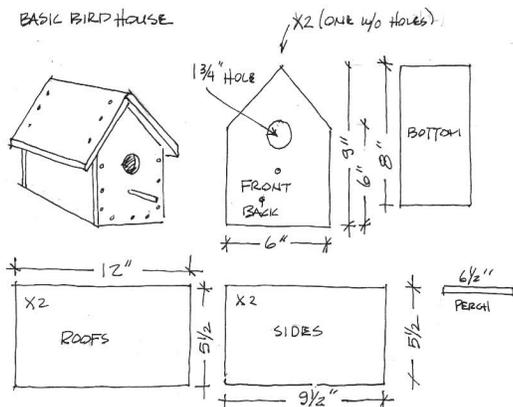
engagement for them. After doing all of the figuring on paper, they were ready to draw their scaled-down models using rulers. Some comments I heard were, "Now it (ratios and fractions) is all finally making sense." They seemed pleased with their creations, and will certainly have pleasant memories of this class.

The Lesson

Resize the bird house dimensions to 1/2 size, 1/3 size, and 1/4 size. Draw and make one out of paper.

Use ratio cross-multiplication to check all answers.

[Images of free house plans blueprints.](#)



Although most students enjoyed this activity, not every student thought working with ratios in order to make a physical representation of the answers was fun. Therefore, I had to consider how to help students who might find an activity like this one, intimidating.

First, I had models already made for all to see. This helped visual learners understand what was meant by 1/2 scale, 1/3 scale, and 1/4 scale. It took the scariness out of the project, making the students feel comfortable about what they were about to do. Second, we worked the first ratio problems together as a class. Then I asked them to get into groups in order to work together to

solve the remaining problems.

| ROOFS | SIDES | FRONT & BACK | BOTTOM |
|------------|---------------|-----------------|----------|
| 12"x5 1/2" | 9 1/2"x5 1/2" | 6"x6" and 6"x9" | 8"x6" |
| 1/2 size | 1/2 size | 1/2 size | 1/2 size |
| 1/3 size | 1/3 size | 1/3 size | 1/3 size |
| 1/4 size | 1/4 size | 1/4 size | 1/4 size |

There were indeed a few students who simply panicked at all the math and froze up. I found that their fears were greatly allayed when I allowed them to watch either me or another student do the math to come up with the newer, smaller dimensions, and then create my own bird house. It was sort of like holding someone's hand while we stepped into water which got deeper and deeper. They were greatly relieved, and were able to watch, ask questions, and learn. The information washed over them like a wave, but they held on without drowning. Something stuck, and will be there to catch more information on ratios, fractions, percent, and geometry at a later time when they will recall something pleasurable about those subjects. It will make it easier for them to grasp more of the information the next time they encounter it.

About the Author

Barbara Morse has been teaching ABE, ASE/GED® in the North East Independent School District in San Antonio, Texas since April 2009, and loves what she does. A published author of, *Things Your Mama Meant To Teach You, But Never Got Around To*, she has lived in San Antonio for twenty-two years with her husband. She was born and raised in Austin, Texas. She can be contacted at (210) 316-0018, barbmorse@satx.rr.com and bmorse@neisd.net

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Teaching Math for a Dream

by Dr. Mario Sanchez

When I volunteered to teach math to adults who need to take the GED®, I never imagined it was going to be such an adventure. Most of the adults who take the class are pursuing the GED® certificate in preparation for passage of the Dream Act. Obtaining this certificate advances their chances to regularize their migratory status in this country. This very fact injects an aspect of urgency and of consequences that could alter their lives.

I teach Spanish-speaking adults, mostly from Mexico, El Salvador, and Honduras. Many of them come to class with serious burdens that range from family obligations and restricted free time to attend class study, and complete assignments, to years of total absence from any academic exposure. Many of them, although having completed some degree of scholary, have forgotten much of what they learned and have a total lack of study habits. Still, they overcome all their shortcomings with tremendous amounts of enthusiasm, fueled by the promise of a better future.

Many of them lack the introspection to realize the amount of math related things they already know and use everyday. Considering this, one of the most useful tools I have discovered while teaching these adults has been to make them conscious of those things they already know. For instance, let's take the multiplication tables. At least 50% of them do not have a command of the multiplication tables; so, most of them need to gain mastery of them. Most of them know the tables from 2 to 5. After questioning them about the issue, first thing I do is write the multiplication tables from 2 to 5 on the blackboard, and then point out the fact that if they know these tables, they already know a good portion of the table of 9, because 2×9 is the same as 9×2 , 3×9 is the same as 9×3 , etc. And the Ooh's and Aahh's, and the way their faces light up when they realize this, is such a satisfying moment for me.

Anyone out there who wants to impress on their students what I call "number sense," should reach for examples that use "money" instead of "numbers." Calculating the ratio of similarity between two triangles or the equivalence of two fractions may not be interesting, but if you want to teach them how to use "cross multiplication" use examples of how to calculate their car payment. Each one of them is already very familiar with calculating monthly payments to pay for their car, television, refrigerator, and even mortgage.

I had a hard time making my students understand number signs in simple operations like addition and subtraction, let alone elements of Cartesian planes or algebra, until the day I stumbled over the "bank account" as an example. Each of them understands

what overdraft means. "Think of your bank statement always in the borderline of solvency/positive balance (positive numbers) and overdraft/debt (negative numbers)" I tell them. Subtracting a negative number from a negative number no longer is an obscure abstract concept, it is now an overdraft from an overdraft, something that all of us have suffered at least once in our lives (and the additional penalty fees associated with such events).

When Geometry comes around, I can see the glazed look in the eyes of many of my students: areas, surfaces, perimeters, volumes are all dark entities out of reach, until I start talking about the number of floor tiles used to replace a grungy kitchen linoleum, yards of whole cloth, gallons of paint to cover several walls, or cooking recipes.

But most important is the idea of teaching them to discover what they know and what they do not know, and how to change that. Apart from clarifying the target of answering a specific test question, this internal accounting awakens in them the idea that things can still be learned, that it is possible to learn "what I do not know" from a book. One of the best rewards I have received is the student who comes to me and asks where should he/she go to continue learning, to take more classes. Just as exciting is to hear a mother tell me, "Now I will be able to help my children when they need to understand fractions, or proportions, or any thing, now I know how to look things up in a book."

About the Author

Dr. Mario Sanchez, holds degrees from both the Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico and the University of Texas at Austin. Founder and retired president of ParSoft TESTING he has extensive experience in testing and educational evaluation. He also has over 35 years experience teaching adults.

Join the WorkforceLitTex Network

The **WorkforceLitTex** email discussion list has had two purposes since it was developed in 2005: to facilitate local collaborative planning between adult education directors and the workforce development community; and to exchange best practices and encourage collaborative efforts within the Tri-Agency Collaboration (Texas Education Agency, Texas Workforce Commission, and Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board). For more information or to subscribe, look for **WorkforceLitTex** on the Email Discussion Lists page on TCALL's home page (<http://tcall.tamu.edu>).

Building Collaboration & Program Involvement

Attracting Fathers to Family Literacy Programs

by Anthony Gabriel

The scope of family literacy programs and their efforts has made significant impacts in the lives of children and their parents all across America. However, there is one component that has constantly been inconsistent and lacking - **more fathers taking an active role in family literacy**. The challenge to get more non-custodial fathers as well as fathers in the home actively involved in rearing and educating their children through literacy activities is matter of national and local priorities or concerns. How, then have efforts to attract larger numbers of fathers been honorable but largely unsuccessful? What questioning, debating, evaluating, and out of the box thinking can be done to change this paradigm?

A discussion of these questions was recently held at the National Conference on Family Literacy (NCFL) in Louisville, Kentucky this past April. Mr. Gregory Rattler Jr., Director of the New Orleans Fatherhood Consortium in New Orleans, and I presented and hosted an active and thought-provoking session designed to examine how to attract more African American and other minority fathers to family literacy efforts. While the focus of our discussion addressed minority fathers, much of our discourse applied universally to all fathers that want to do the best for their children.

We began by examining the current atmosphere and stereotypical images that have often been associated with fathers absent from the home, and fathers in the home that are absent as parental guides for their children. Both of these types of fathers are devalued as contributors, and thus much of the family literacy effort is targeted toward the mother or significant female in the child's life either by necessity or default. Accordingly, much of the data and impact of family literacy is seen through the eyes of women and lacks significant male perspectives.

Paradigm Shift

There must be a serious paradigm shift and an understanding or awareness of the challenges many men face in being part of their children's lives, but more importantly visible and tangible evidence that someone really cares about their experiences.

Unfortunately, many fathers are all painted with the same brush

if they are not actively involved with their children. There must be clear distinctions made between unwilling fathers with resources who fail to support and help educate their children, and fathers with life challenges (unemployed, limited education, no skills, ex-offender), and fathers with relationship conflicts that interfere with them supporting and engaging with their children.

Family literacy programs must assess how they interact with fathers from a number of self-questioning and reflective viewpoints:

- How can we engage and offer support and family literacy opportunities to our fathers?
- Are our efforts culturally sensitive?
- What would motivate a father (minority or otherwise) to want to be a part of our programs or family literacy efforts?
- What kind of classroom environment(s) do these fathers come into (are there other men present)?
- What environments are our fathers are coming from?
- How do we validate the knowledge they already possess?
- Do we visually honor them? (pictures of men that look like them interacting with children in key locations of your family literacy space)
- What type of non- traditional outreach are we doing? (Incentivizing their participation by offering free haircuts, food, movie passes, sporting event tickets, etc.)
- How are we getting feedback from fathers?
- Who does our outreach to fathers? Is it effective? What do we need to change, if anything?
- What mentoring opportunities do we have in place for fathers, particularly for African American or other minority fathers?
- How do we invite fathers that won't self-identify that they have literacy problems?
- What role, can we get the school system, courts, and business community to play in helping attract fathers to family literacy efforts?
- What could we do as part of our local or national coalitions to recruit more fathers?

These questions are just the beginning, and I hope food for thought for those family literacy providers and adult education programs that are looking for new ways of engaging fathers in family literacy.

As we ended our session at the NCFL, it was evident by the responses we received that many providers and practitioners are trying to find effective and engaging ways to connect to fathers. The first step must begin with the removal of any pre-conceived notions about these men and allow them to be leaders of their own learning.

Secondly, the gatekeeper mentality of some must be eliminated before a true and rich dialogue between fathers and family literacy

programs can take place. Thirdly, specific targeting of African American and other minority fathers must be part of a strategic effort that should be designed to help more minority children have opportunities to interact positively with their fathers.

About the Author

Anthony Gabriel is the owner of Gabteach/Gabworks and an educator, consultant, trainer, and activist deeply committed to Adult Education, Workforce Development, Emotional Literacy, and Fatherhood Advocacy. You can email him at gabrteach3831@gmail.com or gabrielliteracy@gmail.com

Hiring Once and for All: Asking the Right Questions to Find the Right Instructor

by Joshua Gahr

You are a bus driver.

Or so goes Jim Collins' famous analogy that likens running an organization to driving a bus. "The bus, your company, is at a standstill, and it's your job to get it going. You have to decide where you're going, how you're going to get there, and who's going with you."

According to conventional management wisdom, says Collins, "great bus drivers immediately start the journey by announcing to the people on the bus where they're going—by setting a new direction or by articulating a fresh vision." This is where Collins' analogy diverges in a nuanced, if not surprising way. "In fact," he asserts, "leaders of companies that go from good to great start not with 'where' but with 'whom.' They start by getting the right people on the bus, the wrong people off the bus, and the right people in the right seats."

What the bus analogy underscores is that an organization can not only produce lofty results once the *right people* are in place, but it can also envision and attain outcomes that were previously unimaginable. This type of management theory recognizes the preeminence of human capital. The people that comprise our staffs are ultimately what inspire, re-form, improve, and sustain our organizations. This is exceedingly true for a family literacy center, where so much "rides" on a staff that is actively and sincerely engaged in forming a community of learning for the success of dual-generational learners. One immediate way that literacy centers can select the right *who* is by revisiting the hiring processes used to get people on the bus in the first place. This article specifically focuses on providing a framework for creating

an incisive question set as a tool for an organization's hiring personnel to identify instructors and support staff that are the right fit.

Preparation: Knowing What You Want

Revisit the program's values. Coordinating and supervisory-level staff should be able to articulate the literacy center's core messaging and values. These values are a natural touchstone for determining the qualities of the staff members that will be implementing the center's mission. ASPIRE Family Literacy Center in Austin, Texas, adopted a motto that is posted on its doors and over whiteboards, "Everyone experiences success through learning." This motto is understood as both an affirmation and as an imperative. It guides teachers to create an atmosphere in which students can and do experience successes in their classrooms. Implicit in this motto are values that they hope to capture in the character of the employees: that instructors see themselves as facilitators of learning; that they see every student as capable of positive transformation; and that they see classrooms as an encouraging and safe environment for a community of learners. Articulating these values provides a concrete rubric to assist in identifying the qualities of the people that will fit well into their educational philosophy.

Articulate the job description. Hiring personnel should attempt to articulate every job description to some degree of detail. Every position has a unique set of requirements, including instructional level, reporting requirements, data collection, enrollment obligations, and expectations for collaborating with other teachers and staff. These ought to be disclosed forthrightly along with any limitations, such as shared classrooms, shortages of books,

no paid prep time, or the like. All these need to be inked in a written job description. Though not contractual in a legal sense, it should be contractual as a supervisory document. It will assist new hires to perform their job adequately by setting appropriate expectations and defining success and failure. It will also assist hiring personnel to hone in on *what* the organization wants- which is often the hardest part of getting *who* it wants.

Matchmaking: Crafting a Question Set

The best interviewing questions are simply a means to assess how well applicants align with the values and skills required to perform a job well. Three principles should guide question-crafting:

Let the “content of character” drive the search. Most people can be “trained up” in particular job skills: the processes of data recording, where to locate classroom resources, and even the best practices for classroom instruction. These particular skills make up the “hard content” of a job description. Equally as important to discern is the “content of the character” of potential hires. Many would-be instructors aim to prove in an interview that they possess adequate knowledge of the content to impart the course, i.e. conditional tenses, auxiliary verbs, or order of operations. The truth is, such skills can (and should) be assessed rather quickly during the interview process. What requires more effort to ferret out is whether the applicant’s values align with the organization’s values as well as the behavioral implications of the applicant’s character. If, for example, the applicant does not seem to value orderliness and punctuality, what implication will this have on data collection, reporting, and implementation of grant requirements? Is that even important? Does your instructional staff need a hard core linguist, a masterful group facilitator, a reading specialist, or an organizational whiz? Questions should be crafted to help identify and clarify the driving qualities, motivations, interests, and attitudes that constitute the applicant’s character.

Seek revealing narratives. Generally speaking, the best indicator of a person’s future reaction to a workplace situation (presumably within your organization) is their past action. Human resource staff often apply this principle to their interviewing practices. The idea is that the most effective interviewing questions focus on generating a narrative about the applicant’s past actions in real situations. Questions should be crafted to avoid theoretical, fictional, or abstract responses. Instead they should focus on how the applicant reacted or how he judged another’s reaction in a real life situation. Applicants will naturally gravitate to recounting. Conversely, they will diminish elements or abridge stories to which they assign minimal importance. A candidate who rarely mentions his students while describing a position in which he thrived, for example, is likely neither a very student-centered teacher nor oriented toward building relationships with students. Depending

on your “bus,” this might raise a flag.

Require sample lessons. Demonstrable competence of the “hard content” is indispensable for accurately evaluating a candidate for an instructional position. A 7-10 minute mock-up or sample lesson can provide a snapshot of a candidate’s presentation style, demeanor, and level of preparation without overburdening the interview process. Give loose guidelines and allow the candidate to take the reins, presenting to their perceived strength. Allow them to structure their time with a mock lesson, grammar or math lessons, technical explanations, role-plays, or a teacher-fronted presentation. Their choices will reveal something about their instructional style and mastery of the art of facilitating group learning.

Obviously, time is a real limitation to getting a thorough sense of their class, but it will be a taste. How is that taste? Savory and enjoyable? Creative, graceful, and commanding? Uncomfortable, awkward, and clunky? This is to some extent reflective of how your center’s clients will experience their class.

Sample Questions: A Jump Start for your Organization

Below is a partial question set that ASPIRE developed in-house that can be used to “jump start” the review of your hiring process. The qualities sought in candidates’ responses appear in the right-hand column of the chart. The aim of questioning is never to unmask or expose a candidate in a vulnerable or humiliating way, but instead to chip away towards the *who* of the applicant in order to fill a seat on your organizational bus.

See table on next page.

About the Author

Joshua Gahr is the Adult Education Coordinator for ASPIRE Family Literacy Center, a program of Communities in Schools of Central Texas, located in the St. John neighborhood in Austin, Texas.

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| Hiring Question | Desired Qualities / Values |
|--|---|
| Experience | |
| 1. Tell us about an adult education teaching position where you felt you thrived. | <i>Factors, resources, & relationships that enhance success</i> |
| 2. Tell us about an adult education position where you or fellow instructor did not thrive. What inhibited their growth or performance? | <i>Factors that impede success</i> |
| Multi-level Experience | |
| 3. What factors make classroom management difficult? | <i>Multi-level challenges, class protocol, behavioral issues</i> |
| 4. What might be some differences between "teaching" and "classroom facilitation"? | <i>Teacher-centered vs. student-centered</i> |
| 5. In the last multilevel class you taught, how did you remember what you had covered and what you had taught your students over previous lessons in past days or weeks of class? | <i>Planning, scope/sequence, organization, documentation</i> |
| Cultural Sensitivity | |
| 6. What do you find challenging about working with a low socio-economic, low education group of students? | <i>Cultural sensitivity, professionalism</i> |
| 7. Have you taken classes as an adult or learned another language? | <i>Empathy</i> |
| Demonstrable Instruction | |
| 8. Please give us a brief (7-10 minute) sample lesson on the theme of transportation for intermediate students. Bring any materials, resources, handouts, or manipulatives you would use in class. | <i>Presentation, demeanor, preparation</i> |
| Materials and Resources | |
| 9. What are the two or three most important resources (texts, etc) for you as an adult education teacher? | <i>Implementing, creating, tailoring curricula</i> |
| 10. Tell us about some classroom materials that you created that you were proud of. | <i>Creativity, preparation</i> |
| 11. Why is a clean, orderly classroom important? | <i>Orderliness, professionalism</i> |
| Teaching Style | |
| 12. Tell us about how you plan your classes. What did the written plans look like at your last teaching position? | <i>Documentation, organization, logic</i> |
| 13. How did you assess student gains in your last adult education classroom? How did you keep track of those gains? | <i>Assessing student need, record keeping, class management</i> |
| Classroom Environment | |
| 14. How do you create community in the classroom? | <i>Respect, safety, community</i> |
| 15. How do you motivate discouraged or unconfident students? | <i>Inspiration, encouragement</i> |
| 16. What impedes student learning in your experience? | <i>Reflective, observant</i> |
| 17. Tell us a story about a student that you feel that you really affected and helped. | <i>Empathy, caring, impact, self-assessment</i> |
| 18. Tell us about a mentor or teacher that influenced you. | <i>Stated values</i> |
| Working in a Professional Environment | |
| 19. What style of communicator do you think you are? | <i>Communication style</i> |
| 20. Tell us how you dealt with a co-worker when you disagreed or disapproved of something they had done. | <i>Integrity, communication style</i> |
| 21. Have you had a position in which administrative reports were expected to be submitted in a timely manner? | <i>Timeliness, consistency, follow through</i> |
| 22. Tell us about an experience you had in a fast-paced, client-centered work environment. How did you have to adjust to a situation quickly and adapt to a "change in the plan." | <i>Flexibility, leadership, innovation</i> |

Developed by J. Gahr, ASPIRE Family Literacy Center

Adult Learner Transitions to Work and Postsecondary Education

Texas Industry-Specific English as a Second Language now has Twelve Work-Based Scenarios

by Barbara Tondre-El Zorkani

Adult education's **Texas Industry-Specific English as a Second Language (TISESL)** curricula now includes twelve work-based **Communication Scenarios** for use with English language (ELL) and adult basic education (ABE) learners. All TISESL materials are now available on the cloud management system, Box.com. Federally and state funded adult education programs may access the materials once they complete the prerequisite professional development.

TISESL training prerequisites have been shortened. Training is requested through the regional GREAT Centers responsible for statewide professional development. Contact information for the GREAT Centers is located on the TCALL home page (www-tcall.tamu.edu).

TISESL Curricula Overview (3 hours)

This is a prerequisite for all who are new to **TISESL** and can be combined with any of the other training options. This training is intended for program administrators and instructional coordinators. It provides a thorough overview of all five **TISESL** curricula. By the end of the training, participants will be able to make an informed decision on which, if any, of the curricula are appropriate for their programs.

TISESL Industry-Specific Curricula (4 hours)

This training pertains to one of the three industry-specific curricula (Sales and Service, Health Care, or Manufacturing) and must be attended by an administrator and key instructional staff. It provides in-depth training and hands-on practice using actual curriculum materials. Successful implementation, technical assistance, and follow-up training needs are discussed.

TISESL Employability Curriculum (3-4 hours)

This training provides program administrators and instructional staff in-depth training on the stand alone employability component. Training time may be extended if a computer lab is used to access the designated website. Students and instructional staff must have email accounts to access the website.

Administrative support is essential.

TISESL Communication Scenarios (3-4 hours)

Administrators and instructional staff are afforded hands-on practice using the actual work-based scenarios:

1. Multiple Demands (in the workplace)
2. Stop the Line (assembly line)
3. The Friendly Security Guard (familiarity)
4. The Frustrated Supervisor (supervision)
5. The Missing Utility Knife (borrowing in the workplace)
6. The Sick Baby (how to manage when working)
7. The Cell Phone (use in the workplace)
8. The Set Up (getting and giving clear instructions)
9. The Big Tease (inappropriate behavior)
10. The Best and the Worst (truck driving)
11. The Illusion of Privacy (confidentiality)
12. Interrupted

This article was first published in April 2013 as #66 in the SHOP TALK, a series that highlights promising practices and address issues, concerns, and questions related to meeting adult learners' needs for workforce development and successful transitions.

Recruitment, Retention, Motivation & Goal Setting

Creating a Sense of Community for Distance Learners: Examples from the Field

by AnneMarie Molinari

The majority of the adult education co-ops in Texas are now providing distance education classes. Over the past few years, we have learned valuable lessons about providing distance education for adult education. We know that a robust distance learning (DL) program contains specific and vital components which are the building blocks for strong student participation and persistence (Askov, Johnston, Petty & Young, 2003; Petty & Johnston, 2008).

These building blocks include:

- recruiting appropriate candidates for distance learning,
- instituting a detailed DL student orientation,
- choosing the appropriate DL teachers,
- utilizing the correct approved curriculum,
- providing effective supplemental resources, and
- developing a strong sense of community for online learners

The last component is often the most difficult for distance learning teachers to implement and maintain. Nevertheless, it is a critical element for helping DL students feel connected to their teacher and to their fellow students. National evidence-based research indicates that creating a sense of community for distance learners supports strong DL student persistence (Askov, Johnston, Petty & Young, 2003; The Institute of Higher Education, 2000).

Here are four direct testimonials from Texas adult education and literacy teachers detailing how they are using technology integration and supplemental resources to build a sense of community for their distance learners. These innovative educators are helping DL students stay engaged with their classmates and teachers long after they attend their very first DL orientation.

Using a wiki: Denise Orand, El Civics Program Coordinator, Clear Creek ISD

One of our program focuses this school year has been building a sense of community or belonging for both our staff and students. We have a program wiki that includes student and teacher resources as well as a forum for students to share their work and

ideas. The wiki page is included on all of our informational flyers, in our orientation packets, and on the back of every student ID. Students are then repeatedly referred back to the page for updated information, pictures and videos from the program, and even for registration. Teachers can use the page to give students assignments for class, to engage interactively during class, or to provide links to further content. Exposing students to using technology as a focal point for gaining information and furthering learning in this way often creates students that are more open to engaging in distance learning outside the classroom.

Our program wiki page is <http://eslusa.pbworks.com>

Using Dropbox: Dr. Glenda Rose, Distance Learning Teacher, Austin Learning Academy

Dropbox, which is available at <https://www.dropbox.com/> is a cloud technology offering file storage and synchronization. Do not let the word “cloud” confuse you. It just means that your files are not physically located on your computer, but are stored on an external server. I chose Dropbox for my class for several reasons: 1) It is free; 2) It allows you to increase your amount of free storage by adding people to your network. If you are going to add student work to your private account, this is an obvious advantage. You can let them “use” your available storage without it costing you personal storage; and 3) It is password protected and you can choose which people see which folders. Using Dropbox has allowed my distance learning and hybrid class students to submit work to me and share with each other. In addition to a folder for assignments, there is a shared folder for photos and each project. Students have been very engaged in the Dropbox community, including sharing their work with friends and family in other parts of the United States and their home countries.

In addition, for students in hybrid classes, projects are displayed on screen to share with their classmates. For some projects, such as personal letters to their children, we had to take digital pictures of the project to present, and students were very careful to remind me if I forgot to take a picture of their work to share. Although distance learning students (mostly full-time workers who can't meet the class-hour requirements) don't

receive credit for these activities, they enjoy participating “in class” remotely. They also find out about special events through shared files, and have access to the class roster, to keep in contact with other students. The only initial challenge was making sure each student had a working email account. Since my students are predominantly ESL students with low-levels of education and initially little, if any, computer literacy, this was a several week process. It has proven well-worth the initial time investment, and I look forward to seeing what else we can do with cloud technologies to promote an even larger digital community in the future.

Using Google Sites: Resa Wingfield, Program Director, Literacy Council of Tyler

Building that sense of community is difficult for the distance learning teacher. One area we had trouble with was the students’ recognition of DL as a class—one that actually requires planning and scheduling in order to meet the participation requirements. We decided that rather than giving students weeks and weeks to complete the 12 face to face hours, we would require those hours up front (usually within the first month). During that time, the students build a relationship with our DL instructor just as they would with the on-site classroom teacher. The need to build that teacher/student relationship seems to be particularly important for students moving from a face-to-face classroom into DL, so we require the 12 hours of them as well even though they already have 12 or more direct hours in TEAMS. We also get a better reading on a student’s ability to work DL into his/her schedule, and the participant can strategize with the teacher about how to handle scheduling problems. This seems to prepare them for greater success.

A strategy that we are just beginning to use is the on-line classroom community. We have created a website (<https://sites.google.com/site/literacycounciltylerdistance/>) in Google Sites that we can use as an initial recruitment tool, but we also plan to add links and activities to the site that will be targeted for the actual DL participants. Exactly what all of this will look like is still under discussion. One possibility is to have DL participants link to Twiducate or Démodé (a Facebook-like site that is designed especially for teachers and students) where they can interact with each other on assignments. Edmodo is already being used to good effect in our face-to-face GED classes and Twiducate is the preferred site for our ESL classes but we are still gathering information on how best to use these resources for our DL students.

Using Weebly.com: Taneshia Uko, Distance Learning Teacher, Wharton County Community College

I designed a website for our distance learners a year ago to organize, simplify and create consistency for our program’s needs. The distance learning website was created using [Weebly.com](http://weebly.com), which is free. Here is the direct link to the website I created for Wharton County Junior College: <http://wcjcdl@weebly.com>

This site advertises what we offer and has a very detailed survey for students to take to help them decide if this program is for them. The students are able to register, log on, and communicate with me all in one spot. The registration gathers contact information, the kind of distance learning program(s) they need, their current instructor, their goals, and even quizzes their understanding of the rules and expectations of participating in our program. Once the registration is submitted, I am sent an email alert with all of this information and I am able to enroll them, add them to the waiting list, or contact them with any questions or concerns. Once they are enrolled, I email them their log on information and directions to return to the site and click on the curriculum I have assigned. The registration form is my favorite. It stores all of their information on the site for easy access, and I have the email, which I print out as the perfect student contract. The Weekly Communication tab is my second favorite, it also shoots me an email that I have received communication and is stored on the site. The students are informed in their initial email from me to also click on my Weekly Communication tab and let me know how things are going. I save the emailed version of the student’s communication to simply reply to after I check their work/activity for the week. Then I can easily go into the site where all of the emails are stored and email those who “forgot” to communicate with me or to complete their hours of work and let them know what needs to happen next for them to continue. This component helps me to document communication, maintain accountability, remember who is doing what in which curricula, and keeps my paper trail virtually anywhere I go. With the email alerts, I know at all times when there is activity on the site and that helps me to respond to students in a timely manner to promote productive communication. The site not only stores the information but it’s able to export it to Excel if I need the information in spreadsheet form. This site has been my sanity saver, time saver, and one stop shop for my students and me.

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About the Author

AnneMarie Molinari has served since 2011 as the Distance Learning Manager for Texas Adult Education & Literacy. For a decade, AnneMarie worked in the field as an ABE, GED® preparation, and high school completion instructor. During her tenure as a teacher, she received a Masters Degree in Special Education with an emphasis on how technology integration can support the needs of adults with special learning needs.

Translationg Research into Literacy Practice

Strategies for Teaching the Adult Student Who is Literate in a Non-Roman Alphabet Language

by Dr. Nancy Montgomery

Students enter adult literacy classes with different literacy characteristics. One of the challenges to teachers is having students who are literate in a Non-Roman alphabet language such as Arabic, Thai, Burmese, or Greek to name just a few. The question most often asked by the teacher is, "How do I facilitate the transference of skills from a Non-Roman alphabet language to English?"

Before that question can be answered we must first look at the strengths rather than the deficits students bring with them. The major strength the students bring with them is the fact that they are literate in their first language. The Common Underlying Proficiency (CUP) theory proposed by Cummins (1991) provided a framework for understanding learning the first language (L1) and the second language (L2). This theory states that in the course of learning the first language a person acquires a set of skills and implicit meta-linguistic knowledge that can be drawn upon when working in another language. This also serves to explain why it becomes easier and easier to learn additional languages.

In practice though, teachers ask the guiding question "How does this work in a real adult literacy setting and what strategies should be used to facilitate the transference of skills from a Non-Roman alphabet language to English?" According to Burt, Peyton, & Adams (2003), the Non-Roman alphabet student needs special considerations such as specific instruction in the Roman alphabet in order to transfer their L1 literacy skills to English.

The strategies chosen to use with this type of adult learner should be non-threatening and hands-on. The students will be very aware that they are working with an unfamiliar system and will need encouragement and opportunities to manipulate the sounds, letters, and spellings in English. They should be able to practice sound-symbol correspondence, spelling patterns, and use of common letters such as a, e, i, r, s, t, showing both the upper and lower case forms. Words should be chosen from stories, newspapers, or books the students are currently reading

that exemplify particular phonics or spelling patterns for students to practice. Using strategies such as these give the teacher the opportunity to sort out what concepts are confusing to the student and correct that confusion.

A specific strategy to help this type of student acquire Roman alphabetical knowledge in a non-threatening manner is "Making Words" (Cunningham & Cunningham, 1992). This is a teacher directed spelling activity in which students arrange letter cards to spell words. The teacher should take words from materials the students are working on to correlate new word knowledge with what they are studying at that time. The following are the steps to the strategy, "Making Words," which can be used as a review before teaching a story or unit, as part of vocabulary building, or as an assessment after instruction.

1. Prepare a set of letter cards with multiple copies of each letter giving the upper and lower case form of each letter, even though these adult learners may not know both forms.
2. Teachers should choose a word or words to use in the word-making activity from the books or story the students are working on. Without telling the students the word, distribute the needed letter cards to the students.
3. Ask students to sort cards into vowels and consonants.
4. Ask students to use the letter cards to spell words containing two, three, four, or more letters. The teacher can have the students list the words they spell on a chart which gives practice in using the Roman alphabet to form words.
5. Ask students to identify two-letter words they have made with the letter cards and continue on to create longer and longer words until they can identify the chosen word made with every letter card. An example found in *Literacy in the 21st Century* by Tompkins shows how the students made other words from the word "hieroglyphics" beginning with 2-letter words to 7-letter words. Teachers can then suggest words they have missed and point out spelling patterns taught.

While using rote memorization of the Roman alphabet with the adult learner may be seen as demeaning with little effect on

learning English, using word strategies that correlate with the learner and what they are studying will result in providing the Non-Roman alphabet language student access to what Krashen (1981) called “comprehensible input.”

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About the Author

Dr. Nancy V. Montgomery is Assistant Clinical Professor in the College of Education, Department of Teaching and Learning at Southern Methodist University.

Professional Development

Literacy Forward: Instructor Training Developed in the Heart of Texas

by Ken Appelt, TCALL & Meg Poag, Literacy Coalition of Central Texas

Volunteer literacy programs have searched for a way to quickly train new volunteers and make them effective in the classroom. Inadequate training can be costly in terms of attrition because both volunteers and students need to feel successful. While training seminars on “how to be a trainer” and how to develop training plans have been available, they do not adequately address the actual content that new teachers would need to know to become effective instructors of Adult Basic Education (ABE) or English as a Second Language (ESL).

The Literacy Coalition of Central Texas (LCCT) has been working to address this professional development training dilemma. Founded in 2001, LCCT has helped strengthen the literacy services of members in the five county area surrounding Austin, Texas through public awareness, program coordination, and the development of the training system known as Literacy Forward.

The two major training resources of Literacy Forward have been developed over the last six years: **English Forward Training System** (2008) for ESL instruction and **Adult Basic Literacy Forward Training System** (2010) for ABE instruction. Literacy Forward is the nation’s first comprehensive, evidence-based training system for adult basic literacy and English language instruction. Although these trainings were developed originally for the

needs of the coalition members, LCCT has conducted trainings in Fort Worth, Houston, Corpus Christi, Wichita Falls, Lufkin, and South Texas with support from the Volunteer Training Initiative at TCALL. Literacy Forward trainings have also been conducted in other states as well.

Brief History of the Two Literacy Forward Training Systems **History of English Forward training development**

In 2008, the Literacy Coalition of Central Texas launched its Literacy Advancement Initiative (now called Literacy Forward) in response to the community’s request for quality instruction in ESL. The development of the English Forward Training System was led by Dr. Heide Spruck Wrigley of Literacywork International. Under Dr. Wrigley’s guidance, the LCCT conducted a needs assessment among Central Texas literacy service providers and found an overwhelming need for training in best practices for teaching ESL. Following the assessment were surveys, case studies, and focus groups that involved program staff, teachers, volunteers, and students, all to determine how a training system could best meet the needs of local literacy programs.

From late 2008 through spring 2009, LCCT held its first Training-of-Trainers. This months-long series, led by Dr. Wrigley, prepared a host of teachers in the community to train others in effective

best practices for the ESL classroom. Since LCCT officially launched English Forward in April 2009, it has trained over 542 instructors in Central Texas and communities nationwide.

History of Adult Basic Literacy Forward training development

In 2010, the Literacy Coalition again responded to service provider feedback by expanding the Literacy Forward Training System to include resources and a training system to support ABE instruction. LCCT held an Adult Basic Literacy Training-of-Trainers for literacy instructors, which was a series of workshops, each devoted to a different aspect of teaching adult basic literacy and featuring its own expert trainer. Topics included learning differences, customizing curricula to meet student needs, effective teaching strategies, and numeracy.

Then, LCCT combined the content of the training series with additional research by Barbara Baird, M. ED, to create the *Adult Basic Literacy Instructor Guide*. The Guide includes a framework for planning lessons and practical, student-centered teaching techniques for the ABE classroom. LCCT held its first Adult Basic Literacy Forward Instructor Training in November 2010 and to date has trained 143 literacy instructors in Central Texas and communities around the state.

Delivery of Literacy Forward Trainings

The Literacy Forward Training System has both *instructor training* and *training of trainers* components so that local programs are able to sustain implementation by providing ongoing training using local program trainers.

12-hour Training for New Instructors

A Master Trainer from LCCT conducts in-person, two-day training for up to 30 new instructors. As part of the training, participants receive instruction on the theoretical foundation of adult education, evidence-based teaching and learning strategies, and sample classroom activities.

Participants are trained to plan ABE lessons, to employ key teaching strategies in the classroom, and to use the manual's instructional materials. The 12-hour training offers practical techniques for volunteers to help adult learners build proficiency in specific areas, and emphasizes a student-centered approach to adult basic literacy instruction.

Includes licensing of Literacy Forward Instructor Manual, a list of materials for teacher toolkits, and DVD's with instructional demonstrations of English Forward teaching strategies.

Literacy Forward Training of Trainers

Two, four-hour instructional webinars to create certified master trainers who can administer Literacy Forward Instructor trainings on an on-going basis.

Includes licensing of Literacy Forward Trainer Manual with training guide, PowerPoint presentation for Instructor Training, training evaluation tools, training agenda and facilitation instructions, room set-up instructions, and all training materials, including instructions for training activities. Also includes valuable strategies and tips on conducting effective trainings.

Additional Materials Recently Developed

Follow-up with the trained instructors revealed the need for the development of a *video demonstration*, a *classroom curriculum* to be used by trained instructors, and a *web portal* for on-going support and instructional resources. The classroom curriculum was completed in late 2012, supported by local private foundation funding.

Video Demonstration: *Using effective lesson flow and teaching strategies*

For many new and experienced instructors, the best way to integrate best-practice teaching strategies is through the use of a detailed teaching demonstration to illustrate the lesson flow and integration of evidence-based teaching activities. The video demonstrates key strategies and how to bundle them effectively. The video has been integrated into the second edition of the ESL Instructor Training.

Classroom Curriculum:

The English Forward Curriculum is to be used by teachers and students in **beginning ESL classrooms**. This curriculum provides the content and activities for **the first 60-100 hours of instruction** in an ESL classroom.

Literacy Forward Web-portal:

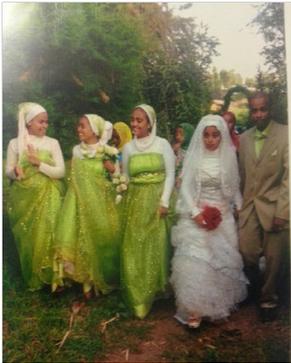
The Literacy Forward curriculum and training series was recently enhanced by the addition of a carefully designed web portal for instructors and trainers. Any Literacy Forward trained instructor will be registered to allow access to a web-based portal for timely lesson plans (current events, holidays, etc.) and peer teaching tips and strategy sharing. The portal will also link instructors to an up-to-date list of language learning resource websites for various instructional challenges and innovations for those instructors who really want to do some extra professional development.

You can contact the **Literacy Coalition of Central Texas** through their website: <https://www.willread.org> "dedicated to supporting and expanding literacy services so that businesses can hire, people can work, and families can thrive."

Success Stories

From Eritrea to Pearland and Back – A New US Citizen Gives Back to His Native Country

by Alex George



My name is Alex Antonio George. I was born on March 11, 1985, in Assab, Ethiopia (now Eritrea) in East Africa, close to the Red Sea. Eritrea won its independence from Ethiopia in 1993 after many years of civil war. My father was born in what is now Eritrea. My mother was born in Ethiopia. My nationality was mixed, Eritrean and Ethiopian. I completed the 10th grade of high school in

Assab, Eritrea in 2000. I had one older sister, Nigisti.

In 2002, my sister received a letter from the Eritrean army ordering her to report for mandatory service. My father refused to allow her to serve because sexual abuse was common at the military base. My father was then arrested and imprisoned. While in prison, he was severely tortured for three months. A few days after his release, he died from physical and mental complications resulting from his imprisonment and torture. Shortly after my father's death, my mother returned to her home country of Ethiopia. My sister was drafted into the Eritrean army and was later killed during combat.

When I turned 17 years old, I served in the Eritrean Army for a period of eight months and was sent to fight near the border town of Bure, Ethiopia. During my service near Bure, the Eritrean Army began killing unarmed Ethiopian civilians. I refused to kill innocent, unarmed civilians. As a result, I, with another member of the army, Yonas, made plans to escape the army by fleeing to Djibouti. However, before we could escape we were arrested and placed in military prison.

Over a ten day period in October of 2003, we took scissors and chipped out bricks from the prison wall. Yonas, another prisoner, and I escaped through the opening. We walked for three days until we reached the border of Djibouti. There we were taken to a refugee camp, where the conditions were very poor. After approximately two months, the Djibouti government ordered all refugees

to leave the country. My friend, Yonas, returned to Assab, Eritrea on the first boat. There was not enough room for everyone on that boat. When the boat returned six days later for the next group, I learned Yonas had been arrested, imprisoned, and then killed upon his arrival by the Eritrean military. I was scared to go back home, so I decided to stow away on a ship in the Djibouti harbor on January 17, 2004. I hid in the engine room for five days with no food or water. The crew finally discovered me in the engine room and took me into custody. One month later the ship arrived in Galveston, Texas. The vessel turned me over to the United States government. In February, 2004, I was taken to an immigration detention center in Houston. Catholic Charities gave me an attorney, Peter. I remained at the detention center for a year and six months. Finally, the judge gave me asylum because the military had ordered me to do something illegal, kill civilians.

My lawyer's family became my family. I was surrounded with a great family. My attorney friend, Peter is here today. God bless his family. God gave me hope and ability. I have been going to college for four years. I applied for US citizenship and took the class. The class was helpful, and I passed the test the very first try. I knew all the questions. I was the first student to get my citizenship under the new Adult Reading Center grant. On March 21, 2012, now with my US citizenship, I travelled to my home to see my 67-year-old mother for the first time in 10 years. I also met my future wife and married her. We are working to get her a Green Card, so she can come here with me.

When I went to Ethiopia last summer I had a cooking education from America, so I used my own money to buy food and cook it and give it to the homeless and mothers with children that needed food. Many people helped me and gave me a chance, so I want to do the same for others. I also hope to one day cook in the White House for the US President. Thanks to all of you at the Adult Reading Center for helping students like me. God bless America!

About the Author

Alex George prepared for his naturalization exam at the Adult Reading Center of Pearland.

Mother Earns GED® Credential, Aims to Inspire Next Generation's Success

by Yvette Katherine Maese

Life has been a struggle without a GED® certificate. My plans after obtaining my GED® certificate are to obtain a better education which will open new doors, therefore providing a better future for my children and myself. The thing that most motivated me to come back to school is to set an example as well as to accomplish my goal in life -- to give my children confidence, so they can continue with their education.

Life has been a struggle without my GED® certificate because when you have a high school diploma or a GED® certificate, job opportunities are very different from when you don't have one. I have had many jobs, yet it seems none of them have had that satisfaction in life for me to feel complete. Currently, more and more companies are requiring a high school diploma or a GED® certificate. The economy has changed a lot and things are more expensive. With my past experience in jobs I have struggled to make it. For the past years, I have been living paycheck to paycheck and realized that is not the lifestyle I want for me and my children.

This is why I decided to return to school and accomplish my goal to receive my GED® certificate. I believe it is one of the best decisions I have made although, at times, it seems difficult to find the courage to elevate my self-esteem and push myself to say "you can do it." Nothing is impossible if you really set your mind to getting it done. I have had good times as well as rough times, but yet have never given up.

The thing that most motivated me to come back to school was to continue my education and obtain a degree. I intend to expand my job opportunities for higher pay to enjoy doing a career that I will like. It is also imperative that I become a good role model for my children for the future. Therefore, I believe once I obtain my diploma, I will get better opportunities in life. Besides my goal to receive a GED® certificate, I want to offer my children a better future by setting an example to give them the knowledge and confidence they need to proceed with their education and have a good career, so they will never have to struggle as I have until now. My children are my whole world and, as their mother, my goal and purpose in this world is to see them succeed in this life and be able to continue to a better path.

In conclusion, I believe that education is very important in life. You never stop learning, and with more experience, you have the better opportunities in life. Education will always be a benefit for everyone in order to succeed. So remember, if you have not yet obtained your GED® certificate, just have in mind it is never too late to accomplish that goal. It will always benefit tomorrow's future.

About the Author

Yvette Katherine Maese is currently a student at Ysleta Community Learning Center in El Paso, Texas. She is a proud mother. She hopes to further her education by attending a technical school.

I was Ashamed that I Couldn't Read, and I Didn't Want Anybody to Know

Reprinted with permission from Literacy Council of Tyler

Cassandra Swanson graduated from Robert E. Lee in 1986. She went to work right after school and held a variety of jobs over the years. But, in 2010 when she was laid off from Goodyear, she decided that it was time to do something different. So, Cassandra went to the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) to see about going back to school. When she was there, they had her take a Texas Adult Basic Education exam to see how she would do in college.

"I didn't pass," Cassandra says. "My reading level was only second grade. You know if you don't use it you lose it," she goes on to say, "And I had always hated reading, and once I was out of school I didn't have jobs that required a lot of reading."

TWC referred Cassandra to Literacy Council of Tyler where she enrolled in our College prep program with instructor Rick Swain.

"Comprehension was the problem," Cassandra tells us. "Even from when I was young. I would read something and then I couldn't remember what I had just read. Mr. Swain told me what I needed to do was to pick

up a book, pick up a newspaper, to just read everything. So that's what I did." It was good advice; when the time came for Cassandra to take the admissions test, she passed without a problem.

Cassandra is in her fourth semester at TJC (Tyler Junior College), majoring in Medical Office Management. Her grades are good, so good in fact, that she was recently invited to join Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society. "That makes me so happy," Cassandra says, laughing. "I have the certificate framed and hanging in my room."

Not only is Cassandra thriving in school, she loves to read now; her favorite books so far are the Twilight novels. "I feel so much better knowing I can read and comprehend. I think there are a lot of people like me, but nobody knows," Cassandra tells us. "I was ashamed that I couldn't read, and I didn't want anybody to know. I am so grateful that there are programs like the one at Literacy Council for people like me."



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21st Century Skills: Rethinking How Students Learn.

Bellanca, James and Brandt, Ron (2010). Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press. 21st Century Skills examines a challenge today's educators face: how to equip students with the skills to succeed in the twenty-first century. Many critics oppose the idea of teaching 21st century skills on the grounds that emphasizing skills such as critical thinking and problem solving will erode the teaching of important content. The contributors to this volume contend that both knowledge and skills are needed, and they are interdependent. The contributors explore three overarching questions: 1. Why are the skills listed in the Framework for 21st Century Learning needed for learning in the future? 2. Which skills are most important? 3. What can be done to help schools include these skills in their repertoire so that twenty-first century learning results?

How to Teach Reading for Teachers, Parents and Tutors, Fifth Edition. Fry, Edward, Dr. (2012). Westminister, CA: Teacher Created Resources, Inc. This user friendly book gives step by step instruction on how to teach reading. It has ideas that take into account different learning styles and promotes a six-step method of teaching reading, shares the results of Dr. Edward Fry's research in literacy and provides background information on the five essential elements of an effective reading program.

I Speak English: A Guide to Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages - Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing, Fifth Edition. Colvin, Ruth Johnson (2012). Syracuse, NY: New Readers Press. This guide to teaching ESOL students listening, speaking, reading, and writing covers such topics as contexts of language learning, culture, learning styles, characteristics of adult tutors and learners, and integrating reading and writing into lessons. It guides instructors in helping non-English speaking students move quickly from controlled language to spontaneous language, thus providing opportunities for real-life expression.

Men Can Get Embarrassed, Too! Confusing English Vocabulary for Spanish Speakers. Firsten, Richard (2000). Burlingame, CA: Alta Book Center Publishers. The author intends this book to clear the confusion that deceptive cognates (words that appear the same or similar in two languages, but whose meanings are quite different) can create between English and Spanish. This book is written for Spanish speakers learning English, English speakers learning Spanish, and teachers of either language. Each unit opens with an illustrated glossary, followed by interactive exercises intended to help learners

internalize the correct uses. Over 100 explanations and examples are included.

More Powerful Literacies.

Tett, Lyn and Hamilton, Mary and Crowther, Jim, Editors (2012). Leicester LE1 7GE, UK: National Institute of Adult Continuing Education. Building on the original Powerful Literacies (first published in 2001), this new volume considers the new developments in theory, technology, and policy that are having an impact on learning and teaching literacies of adults. The book links to the current policy context of lifelong learning, active citizenship, and social inclusion by showing how adult learners can be positioned in ways that seek to enhance their control and autonomy.

QBQ! The Question Behind the Question: Practicing Personal Accountability at Work and in Life. Miller, John G. (2012). New York: Penguin Group. With the concept of QBQ, the author addresses the issue of personal accountability. This book suggests a method for putting personal accountability into daily action, which can lead to: getting problems solved, bringing down barriers, improved service, grow teamwork, and people adapting to change.

The Teacher's Guide to Success, Second Edition. Kronowitz, Ellen L. (2012). New Jersey: Pearson Education, Inc. This book is organized into eight topical units that address the everyday needs, concerns, and realities of today's educators. Teachers are guided from the very first day to the end of the school year. From organizing the physical classroom to mapping out a differentiated curriculum, the challenges of teaching are identified and streamlined. The companion website is packed with engaging examples from real live classrooms, advice from leading authorities in education, and helpful additional resources for your first year teaching.

Teaching Adult Literacy: Principles and Practice. Hughes, Nora and Schwab, Irene, Editors (2010). New York, NY: Open University Press. In this book, the authors offer guidance on how to work with adult learners to develop their literacy skills and practices. They challenge the negative view of adult literacy learners as social 'problems', often described in terms of their deficits. They promote an alternative view of people who have rich resources and skills in many areas of their lives which they can bring to the learning process.

HOW DOES THIS MAIL ORDER LENDING LIBRARY WORK?

Books and other resources described in the Library section may be requested for a 30-day loan. We will mail each borrower up to five loan items at a time (just two for first-time borrowers), and even include a postage-paid return address sticker for mailing them back to us! Borrowers must be affiliated with a non-profit program providing adult or family literacy services. Annotated bibliographies of our entire library of resources are available in hard copy by request, and the library can also be searched in 'real time' on our website (<http://tcall.tamu.edu>). Call 800-441-7323 or email tcall@tamu.edu to check out materials described here or to request hard copy listings of even more resources.

Uncovering The Logic of English: A Common-Sense Approach to Reading, Spelling, and Literacy, Second Edition. Eide, Denise (2012). Minneapolis, MN: Pedia Learning Inc. Predominant reading methods require students to break the complex code of English without help. This has resulted in low literacy rates and explains why many highly educated professionals cannot spell. By revealing the logical patterns underlying 98% of English words, this book eliminates the need to guess and provides a logical solution to English spelling. As the rules unfold it becomes apparent how this knowledge is vital to reversing the educational crisis that is plaguing America. This slim volume is easy to read and accessible to parents and classroom teachers. An appendix summarizes the most important concepts for quick reference.

Using a Dictionary: Skill Instruction and Practice. Wooton, Dean S. (2006). Syracuse, NY: New Readers Press. This set of consists of two books. Using a Dictionary 1 is for beginning students and it includes concise explanations, repeated exercise formats, simplified vocabulary, and more. Using a Dictionary 2 presents longer sentences with detailed explanations, repeated exercise formats, more use of passives, and more multisyllabic vocabulary.

Using Technology with Classroom Instruction that Works, Second Edition. Pitler, Howard and Hubbell, Elizabeth R. and Kuhn, Matt (2012). Denver, CO: McREL. This book outlines the most appropriate technology applications and resources for all nine categories of effective instructional strategies:

setting objectives and providing feedback; reinforcing effort and providing recognition; cooperative learning; cues, questions, and advance organizers; nonlinguistic representations; summarizing and note taking; assigning homework and providing practice; identifying similarities and differences; and generating and testing hypotheses. Each strategy-focused chapter features examples across grade levels and subject areas, and drawn from real-life lesson plans and projects of teachers integrating relevant technology in the classroom in ways that are engaging and inspiring to students. The authors also recommend dozens of word processing applications, spreadsheet generators, educational games, data collection tools, and online resources.

You Can Teach Someone to Read, Second Edition Revised. Peoples, Lorraine (2011). Gilbert, AZ: GloBooks Publishing LLC. With lesson plans, built in evaluation, and tips on how to reach students, this book's emphasis is on the important basic reading skills of: Memorizing a sight word vocabulary of words used most often, which can't be figured out by using the most commonly used phonics rules. Using the most commonly used phonics rules to figure out words used most often, which don't need to be memorized, and obtaining a firm knowledge of how to apply those rules to future unknown words. Developing basic comprehension skills to assure that the reader understands what the words are saying. Check lists are provided for determining how the student learns best. Multiple activities and unique yarns, called "Silly Stories," and cartoon illustrations make phonic rules and sight words fun to learn and more memorable.





Email TCALL's Library Staff (tcall@tamu.edu) to request the current web address of these online resources - or to request a free hard copy by mail.

Read it Online or Free by Mail

Annotated Bibliography on Family Literacy. Goodling Institute Family Literacy (September 2012). University Park, PA: Goodling Institute. Created and updated by the Goodling Institute for Research in Family Literacy, the Annotated Bibliography is an online, searchable database that includes citations and brief descriptions of hundreds of peer-reviewed research articles and books pertaining to family literacy and parental involvement in education.

Aspirations Toolkit. National College Transition Network (2012). Boston, MA: National College Transition Network. The Aspirations Toolkit is a set of counseling and instructional practices and tools contributed by adult educators around the country. Contributors implement these lessons and activities with adult learners in various class types (e.g. ESOL or GED) and at a range of skill levels to foster aspirations, goal setting habits and to inspire them to begin planning for next steps along their education and career pathway.

The Cornerstones of Economic Security for Resilient Workers: A Policy Framework for Shared Action. Henton, Doug (April 2013). Washington, DC: National Governors Association Center for Best Practices. This report sets forth a new framework for economic security with the goal of strengthening the link between workers' economic security and productivity. The framework places worker resilience—the ability to respond and adapt to the changing economic landscape—at the core of creating their economic security. It identifies four cornerstones of economic resilience—skills and adaptability, income and savings, health and wellness, and mutual support and social networks—as the key assets individuals must have to navigate today's economy. And it asserts that government at all levels, the private sector, communities, and individuals have shared responsibility in insuring economic security going forward and will share in the benefits of such a “worker resilience system.” Finally, the report posits that states are the critical link between all the stakeholders that can help ensure economic security.

Improving Adult Literacy Instruction: Developing Reading and Writing. Lesgold, Alan M. (2012). Washington, D.C. The National Academies Press. More than an estimated 90 million adults in the United States lack the literacy skills needed for fully productive and secure lives. The effects of this shortfall are many: Adults with low literacy have lower rates of participation

in the labor force and lower earnings when they do have jobs, for example. They are less able to understand and use health information. And they are less likely to read to their children, which may slow their children's own literacy development. The National Research Council convened a committee of experts from many disciplines to synthesize research on literacy and learning in order to improve instruction for those served in adult education in the U.S. This report from that committee recommends a program of research and innovation to gain a better understanding of adult literacy learners, improve instruction, and create the supports adults need for learning and achievement. Although this is not intended as a “how to” manual for instructors, teachers may also find the information presented here to be helpful as they plan and deliver instruction.

Improving Adult Literacy Instruction: Supporting Learning and Motivation. Lesgold, Alan M. (July 2012). Washington, D.C. The National Academies Press. According to a recent survey estimate, more than 90 million adults in the United States lack the literacy skills needed for fully productive and secure lives. The National Research Council convened a committee of experts from many disciplines to synthesize research on literacy and learning in order to improve instruction for those served in adult education in the U.S. This booklet summarizes the report of that committee and describes principles of effective instruction to guide those who design and administer adult literacy programs and courses. It also explores ways to motivate learners to persist in their studies, which is crucial given the thousands of hours of study and practice required to become proficient. The booklet concludes with a look at technologies that show promise for supporting individual learners and freeing busy adults from having to be in a particular place in order to practice their literacy skills.

Improving Employment and Earnings for TANF Recipients. Hamilton, Gayle (2012). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education. A recent education research synthesis brief from the Urban Institute, *Improving Employment and Earnings for TANF Recipients*, reviews strategies found effective in increasing employment and earnings among welfare recipients to reduce their long-term reliance on welfare benefits. The findings show a clear role for skills enhancement, but also suggest balancing a focus on job-seeking and work with goal-directed education and training.

Making Sense of Decoding and Spelling: An Adult Reading Course of Study. MacArthur, Charles and Alamprese, Judith A. and Knight, Deborah (August 2010). Washington, DC: The National Institute for Literacy. This set of materials is an evidence-based course of study designed to teach adult learners to decode and spell words accurately and fluently. Materials for the course of study include three publications: (1) Teachers' and Administrators' Guide, (2) Lesson Plans, and (3) Learner Activity Book. The materials are designed to be used as one component of a comprehensive adult reading course targeted to adult basic education (ABE) learners at the low-intermediate level (fourth to seventh grade equivalence level). Teachers' and Administrators' Guide is designed to assist ABE instructors in using the course of study. Learner Activity Book is designed for use by individual learners in conjunction with the lessons. Each learner should have a copy. *For Texas educators only, the Clearinghouse can provide a free hard-copy set including the Teacher's Guide, Lesson Plans, and one sample Learner Activity Book.*

Pathways to Prosperity: Meeting the Challenge of Preparing Young Americans for the 21st Century. Harvard Graduate School of Education (February 2011). Boston, MA: Harvard Graduate School of Education. While this study is not explicitly about adult education, it is significantly about what we can do as a nation to stop failing our youth and young adults. The recent career pathways movement that has been taking place in adult education aligns very well with the recommendation in the report. Employers and their trade associations should work with schools to provide structured part-time employment linked to the student's interest and line of study. This would address one of the most damaging disconnects in our current education system

where college students work in areas not related to their degree. This connection would enlist the employer as a partner in both training students and in encouraging them to persist with their studies.

Student Voices on the Higher Education Pathway: Preliminary Insights and Stakeholder Engagement Considerations. Public Agenda and WestEd (2012). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education. Study reports on the opinions of current and former community college students (including completers and non-completers) about the expectations for and experiences in college. In the focus groups that inform the substance of this study, the authors paid particular attention to how some students succeed while others do not. The report also focuses on students' opinions about those factors that could have enhanced their success.

Working with Preliterare and Beginning Literacy Level Parents in Family Literacy and Parent Involvement Programs. Shaughnessy, Colleen and Prins, Esther (November 2012). University Park, PA: Goodling Institute for Research in Family Literacy. Practitioner's Guide #3 provides recommendations for educators working with preliterare and beginning literacy level parents. There is an increasing number of immigrant learners in programs, and educators can better assist this population by tailoring instruction and programmatic offerings to these families.



Texas Adult & Family Literacy Quarterly is the publication of the Texas Center for the Advancement of Literacy & Learning (TCALL), made available free to adult educators, literacy providers, and others interested in adult and family literacy. **The Quarterly** is dedicated to advancing knowledge in the field by addressing topics of concern to adult and family literacy practitioners, adult learners, and scholars. The audience includes teachers, students, administrators, program coordinators, researchers, literacy volunteers, and in general individuals interested in the fields of adult and family literacy.

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Organizational Sponsorship

The Quarterly is published by TCALL as an activity of The Texas Adult & Family Literacy Clearinghouse Project, an adult education state leadership project funded through Texas Education Agency through August 31, 2013, then transitioning to be funded under the Texas Workforce Commission effective September 1, 2013.

TCALL is a University Center at Texas A&M University, College of Education and Human Development, Department of Educational Administration and Human Resource Development.

The contents of **The Quarterly** do not necessarily represent the views or opinions of the Texas Center for the Advancement of Literacy & Learning, Texas A&M University, Texas Education Agency, nor Texas Workforce Commission.

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